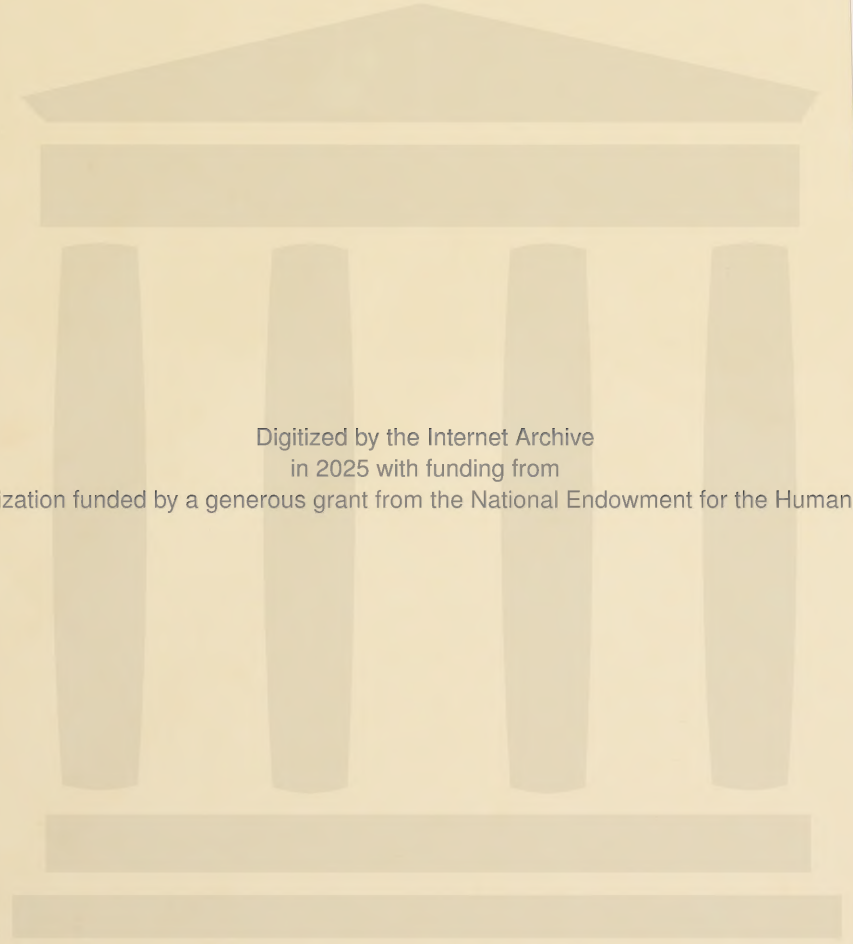
BHHC-8-1-17



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
Digitization funded by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

https://archive.org/details/castilloconcrete00harv

Castillo Concrete helping build one of the world's biggest walls

Belen company is making traffic and sound barriers for the Big I

By Donna Redman
For the Journal

BELEN — A Valencia County business is putting its stamp on the Big I reconstruction project in Albuquerque.

Castillo Ready Mix Concrete, located just north of Belen, has the contract to supply walls that separate and direct traffic flow, sound barriers, and forms for the stabilized-earth wall that will extend along the eastern side of I-25 just south of the Big I.

It also is supplying the coping — the top layer for the walls — for the panels and the concrete posts to support them.

With a total surface of 750,000 square feet, the stabilized-earth wall will be the second-largest of its kind in the world, said Leonard Castillo, who owns and operates the company with his wife, Regina, and son, Richard.

Castillo said similar projects have taken five years to build.

The Big I is scheduled to be finished in only two years, and Castillo said he is proud of the fact that his company is helping make that possible.

Besides the miles of wall barrier and the panels for the earth wall, the Castillos are supplying approximately 250,000 square feet of sound wall. The exact dimensions of the sound-wall panels vary depending on their placement, but an average panel is 12½ feet wide, 25 feet tall and 8 inches thick.

"We cast 12 half-panels a day, which equates to six sound-wall panels a day," Richard Castillo said. "When we were going full bore, we were pouring about 175 cubic yards of concrete a day."

The sound walls have a design on each side, not just on the freeway side, but also on the side facing residential areas. The Castillos devised a method of welding two cast panels together to make one panel with the same design on both sides.

"Before we bid on the Big I project, we bought all the rebar that was needed," Leonard Castillo said. "We had all the wall barriers finished by June, well before they were needed."

Castillo, who was born and raised in Belen, is a 1955 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and has always had an interest in engineering, he said. In 1964, he started hauling sand and gravel and fill dirt, as well as demolishing old buildings. He saved the salvageable parts of buildings he demolished, including the old courthouse in Los Lunas.

The Castillos started Ready Mix Concrete in 1984 on two acres near Belen. In 1994, they began making cattle guards, first for a ranch, then for Socorro County.

Someone asked Castillo if he could make a water gap gate to extend across arroyos, keeping livestock where they belong but swinging up to let water through during runoff floods. He designed one, and the firm has been making them ever since.

Now the firm also does precast concrete and makes heavy duty sand and gravel conveyor belts.

When Castillo made his first bid on a contract for barriers for another highway project, the buyer wanted the walls sooner than Castillo could get the materials to make them. He lost the contract.

Since then, he stocks raw materials he will need before he submits his bid for a job, as he did for the Big I project.

Richard Castillo holds degrees in civil engineering and petroleum engineering and a master's degree in structural engineering.

"I draw my ideas out on a napkin," Leonard Castillo said, "and Richard does his on CAD, on his computer. Between us, we get the job done."

At the peak of production last year, the Castillos had 75 employees; there are 55 now.

"Our payroll is pretty close to $32,000 a week," Leonard Castillo said.

"This was a group effort," Leonard Castillo said. "It wasn't just me or my wife or my son."

MARK HOLM/JOURNAL

READY TO GO: Castillo Ready Mix Concrete's yard is filled with cast walls to guide traffic and deflect noise at the Big I.

Lawyers Advertisement

SEMINAR
How To Buy or Sell A Business

James Compton
Attorney

Learn How To:
- Buy or sell a business
- Choose the correct business for you
- Structure a winning offer to purchase
- Analyze financial statements
- Overcome the concerns of buying and selling

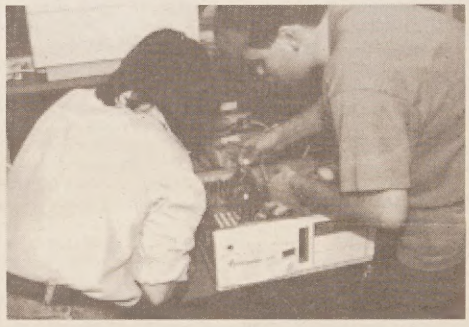
Tony Pino
Certified Business Intermediary

Wednesday, January 17, 2001 • 7:00 - 9:30 pm
The Vaughan Company, 6731 Academy Rd., NE

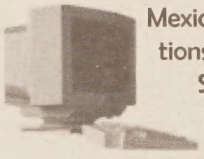
Sponsored by Vaughan Business Opportunities, Inc.
Limited Seating RSVP 797-1100 • Admission $20

THE VAUGHAN COMPANY

Are you looking for a career that is challenging, rewarding & in demand?



A+ Network+ CIW Microsoft



The Information Technology program at the University of New Mexico - Valencia Campus now offers degrees and certifications in three specialty areas: Internet Web Master, Computer Systems Engineer and Computer Programmer. All of these areas prepare you for national certifications in highly-paid fields that are in high demand. The UNM-Valencia Campus is a great place to continue your education – at a third of the cost of a traditional four-year college. No hassle parking. A short, scenic drive. Small classes with individual attention. . .

Isn't it time you did something great for yourself?

Hurry! Spring semester registration ends Jan. 19th
Senior Citizens: $5/credit hour*

*If taking 6 credit hours or less

No appointment is necessary!
Student Services & Registration are open
9 am - 6 pm, Tues. - Thurs., & 9 am - 5 pm, Friday
To save you time, call 925-8560 for more information.

The University of New Mexico
VALENCIA

Experience Success!

The University of New Mexico - Valencia Campus
280 La Entrada • Los Lunas, NM 87031

IN BRIEF

Nominees sought for Salute awards

The League of Women Voters of Albuquerque/Bernalillo County is accepting nominations for the Salute to Albuquerque Award 2001 and the Salute to Albuquerque Youth Award 2001.

The nomination deadline is Feb. 9.

The League of Women Voters Education Fund gives the Salute to Albuquerque award annually to an individual participating in civic affairs and/or promoting civic education and knowledge of local government. Anyone living or working in Bernalillo County is eligible.

The youth award is being given for the second year. High school juniors and seniors attending school in Bernalillo County are eligible.

Youth nominees should be participating in school or civic affairs or promoting civic education and knowledge of local government.

The student winner will receive $250.

The annual Salute to Albuquerque dinner will be March 31.

Copies of the nomination form can be obtained by calling the league office at 884-8441. For more information, call Claudia Taylor at 889-0497, Diane Goldfarb at 821-4229 or JoAnne Ramponi at 298-2716.

Small-business workshop Friday

"Essentials for starting a new business" is a workshop being offered this month by SCORE, the Service Corps of Retired Executives.

The all-day workshop will cover small-business planning and marketing for anyone interested in starting or expanding a small business.

The workshop will begin at 8:30 a.m. Friday at the Small Business Administration office at 625 Silver Avenue SW.

The cost is $35. Registration can be done in advance by calling 346-7909, or on site.

Albuquerque SCORE provides free business counseling from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays. SCORE is funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Strati is chairman of Kirtland support

Tony Strati has been elected chairman of the board of the Kirtland Partnership Committee for 2001.

Strati is a director at KPMG, an accounting firm. He was previously the managing partner of KPMG.

STRATI

Currently a board member at St. Joseph Healthcare, Strati is a former chairman of the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce.

A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, he is a former Army officer with service in Europe.

Charlie Thomas, former Kirtland Air Force Base commander, was elected vice chairman; and Charles Lanier, former president of Albuquerque Title Co., was elected secretary-treasurer.

The Kirtland Partnership Committee's mission is to preserve and support Kirtland AFB.

Loan fund receives $215,000 in grants

Three grants totaling $215,000 were awarded to the New Mexico Community Development Loan Fund for its technical assistance programs and affordable housing projects.

Executive director Vangie Gabaldón announced the grants from the McCune Charitable Foundation, New Mexico Community Foundation and the Fannie Mae Foundation.

GABALDON

The McCune Foundation gave a multi-year grant to provide technical assistance to nonprofit groups statewide.

The award from the New Mexico Community Foundation is part of the foundation's Rural Livelihoods Initiative, which promotes economic development in the Peñasco Valley of northern New Mexico. The Loan Fund will use the money to support its nonprofit training and technical assistance in the region.

The funding from Fannie Mae supports a technical assistance program to small and mid-size affordable housing projects and assists with development costs for new housing initiatives in Albuquerque.

Founded in 1989, the Loan Fund is a private, nonprofit alternative lender and technical assistance provider to New Mexico small businesses and nonprofits.

Buy it, sell it, give it away.
The Classified Ads.

New Mexico businesses urged to test export opportunities

from **PAGE 1**

opportunities for U.S. businesses in international trade than there are today," he said. E-commerce offers a low-risk, low-cost way to test the waters and recognize potential markets overseas.

The department can help companies research markets, find qualified business partners, analyze industry sectors in different countries and profile potential overseas customers, among other services. Through the Video Gold Key Conferencing program, U.S. firms can meet potential trading partners via video conferencing at Department of Commerce offices.

In New Mexico, the office is at 1100 St. Francis in Santa Fe. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., said Sandra Necessary, international trade specialist.

One company that has used the office as a contact point is CleanAIR Systems Inc. in Santa Fe. The 7-year-old manufacturer of catalytic converters launched its Web site three years ago, said chief operating officer Kathe Kirkbride. Now 65 percent of its sales are outside the United States, with major clients in Taiwan, Canada and Sweden.

"Our Web site draws people from all over the world," Kirkbride said. "Business is growing by 45 to 50 percent a year each year."

The company is developing relationships with clients in Hong Kong, India and several Latin American countries as well. Catalytic converters change harmful exhaust emissions to less harmful compounds, diminishing air pollution.

SCREEN CAPTURE COURTESY OF COMMERCE DEPARTMENT

A STARTING POINT: This is the title graphic on the www.usatrade.gov page, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Web site that is considered a good starting point to begin exploring export opportunities.

Where to begin

To explore export opportunities:

- New Mexico Economic Development Department's Trade Division: (505) 827-0309
- U.S. Department of Commerce in Santa Fe: (505) 827-0350
- www.usatrade.gov
- International Trade Council of New Mexico: 298-3368

The Department of Commerce's Web site, www.usatrade.gov, is a good starting point to begin exploring export opportunities.

It provides access to knowledgeable export workers in more than 220 cities worldwide, free market research on 85 countries, listings of trade events, including virtual trade shows, and more.

By March 5, a new Web site will be available that compiles information from 14 government agencies that deal with trade, creating a one-stop shop online, Mitchell said. The site is www.buyusa.com.

When it starts, he said, it will have 3,000 U.S. companies listed as suppliers and 10,000 highly qualified buyers from around the world. Eventually there may be hundreds of thousands of buyers listed. Once a deal is made between a U.S. company and a foreign buyer, the business owner can take care of related transactions online as well, including banking, insurance, currency exchange and freight arrangements.

Businesses are often advised to launch into cyberspace before government regulations do.

Even as the New Economy takes off, Congress is under pressure to step in with Internet taxation and regulation on such issues as privacy, Bingaman said.

"We need to understand the issues better before we rush in and try to legislate," he said.

New Mexico Magazine celebrates the Mother Road

Nostalgia junkies can get their fix on Route 66 this summer when the famous highway celebrates its 75th anniversary.

A special collectors' issue of New Mexico Magazine devoted to the Route 66 Diamond Jubilee will be on newsstands Tuesday.

The 104-page issue is the second the magazine has produced commemorating the Mother Road. The first, in 1989, "disappeared almost overnight," according to editor in chief Emily Drabanski.

Since then, she said, interest in reviving and preserving the historic road has grown tremendously.

The diamond jubilee issue draws on the limitless affection people hold for the road that "refuses to die," in the words of Adela Amador.

Amador, a cookbook author, writes in the magazine about the path she took from Bernalillo to Los Angeles via Route 66 in search of a job at a war factory.

Other articles include a feature on Bettie Ditto, the owner of Tucumcari's Pow Wow Best Western Motel. Once it had the town's only air-conditioned rooms. Ditto's business savvy paved the way through the uncertain times that came with the rerouting of traffic from Route 66 to Interstate 40 in 1981, according to writer Linda Thornton.

"Hiking La Bajada," by Michael E. Pitel, recalls the intimidation "unsuspecting motorists" faced in the 1920s when faced with the dirt road switchbacks and "slippery" descent on this now forgotten stretch of Route 66.

Where once early motorcars lacking fuel pumps had to ascend it in reverse, today it is a hiking trail offering panoramic views.

Preservation efforts are discussed in an article by Elmo Baca.

Michael Wallis writes about "The Mother Road journey."

The special issue also includes articles on Nob Hill, Santa Rosa, Gallup's Lexington Hotel and information on what is possibly the world's only film-*making* festival, "Flicks on 66," in which filmmakers create a complete short film in one week.

BHHC-2-1-17

CASTILLO CONCRETE